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STATE PASS NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
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STATE FOR EAP/CM - HABJAN AND OES/PCI - ROSE  
STATE ALSO FOR S/SECC, EEB/ESC/IEC, AND OES/EGC AND OES/STC

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SUBJECT: SANMEN NUCLEAR POWER PLANT - OFFICIALS MARK THE START OF CONSTRUCTION

¶1. On April 19, the National Development and Reform Commission - National Energy Administration (NEA), China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC), State Nuclear Power Technology Corporation (SNPTC), and the Sanmen Nuclear Power Company hosted a construction commencement ceremony for the Sanmen Nuclear Power plant in Sanmen, Zhejiang Province, China. This ceremony marked the beginning of phase one of the nuclear power plant construction. Known as the Sanmen Nuclear Power Self-reliance and Supporting Program, the Sanmen project is a collaboration between Chinese and foreign firms to build a nuclear plant using Westinghouse AP1000 technology. The AP1000 reactor is the first 3rd generation reactor to be built in China.

¶2. Over 1,000 project-related workers and 400 VIP guests attended, including Vice Premier LI Keqiang, NEA Administrator ZHANG Guobao, Ministry of Environmental Protection Vice Minister LI Ganjie, Zhejiang Provincial Governor LU Zushang, CNNC General Manager KANG Rixin, the Chairman of SNTPC and others. Bill Borchardt, Executive Director for Operations, Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), Cindy Rosales-Cooper, Assistant for Administration and Finance, NRC as well as Embassy and Congen Shanghai staff (Department of Energy (DOE) and Environment, Science, Technology, and Health (ESTH) Sections) represented the United States.

¶3. Chinese officials praised the Central Government for its support of the project, calling it a milestone in China's nuclear power development history. In his remarks, Vice Premier Li underscored the need to develop new energy such as nuclear to ensure the country's energy security and to boost economic growth. He said China needs to adjust its energy structure to diversify its energy sources and enhance conservation and emission control. Zhang Guobao said that this project is the biggest cooperation project between the United States and China and highlights the two country's efforts in the peaceful use of nuclear power. China made the right decision in choosing the Westinghouse AP1000 reactor because it is the safest technology of its kind that will optimize China's energy structure and protect the environment, said Zhang.

¶4. The Sanmen Nuclear Power Plant will be built in three phases, with an investment of more than CNY 40 billion (USD 5.88 billion) injected in the first phase. The first phase project will include two units each with a generating capacity of 1.25 million kilowatts. The first generating unit will be put into operation in 2013, and the second, in 2014. The plant will eventually have six such units.

¶5. This report has been coordinated with Embassy Beijing DOE and ESTH sections.

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